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Polytymous Nerve Fibres.—Dr. E. Ballowitz¹ has found that the enormous electric nerve fibres of the electric catfish of the Nile, *Malapterurus*, do not branch as ordinary medullated fibres do, but divide at once into from four to nine trunks. The most usual numbers were five or seven, the even numbers, six and eight, being less frequent. The resulting fibres varied much in calibre, but were always thinner than the main fibre, which, however, was not so large in cross-section as the derived fibres taken collectively. A derived single fibre may branch again dichotomously or trichotomously, as ordinary fibres do. The condition shown in the division of the main fibre in *Malapterurus* is intermediate between that found in ordinary nerve fibres and in the electric ray, *Torpedo*, where the branches vary between fifteen and twenty-five.

G. H. P.

Nerve Cells of the Human Cortex.—Helen B. Thomson² has undertaken some interesting computations concerning the composition of the brain in man. She finds that the total number of functional nerve cells in the cerebral cortex of an adult man is in round numbers ninety-two hundred millions, and yet the volume of these is only 1.37% of the whole cortex. The number of giant cells in the cortex corresponds almost exactly with the number of pyramidal fibres passing to the spinal cord, and hence the pyramidal fibres are probably the processes of these cells.

G. H. P.

The Fur Seals and Fur Seal Islands.—The third volume of the voluminous report on the Fur Seal and the Fur Seal Islands, by Dr. David Starr Jordan and his associates, is just issued from the Government Printing Office. The first two volumes, issued some time since, relate to The Fur Seal of the Pribilof Islands: its History, its Natural History, and its Fate. The fourth volume, already issued, consists of Dr. Leonhard Stejneger's report on The Fur Seal Islands of Russia and Japan.

The present volume is due to the enlightened interest of Mr. Charles Sumner Hamlin, then Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, who instructed the Commission to use all possible effort to complete our knowledge of the fauna and flora of the regions visited.

The present volume of 630 quarto pages is devoted almost entirely

¹ Ballowitz, E. Ueber polytome Nervenfaserteilung, *Anat. Anzeiger*, Bd. xvi, pp. 541-546.

² Thomson, H. B. The Total Number of Functional Cells in the Cerebral Cortex of Man, etc., *Journ. of Comp. Neurology*, vol. ix, pp. 113-140.